M 342 with raffia thongs. These walls are very strong and durable. The roof is usually covered with thatch, but it frequently happens that the native also uses panels of raffia to cover his hut. [43]

M 361 Among the peoples who live west of the lake, the huts are grouped in clusters of two or three and placed in two parallel lines. The free space between the clusters is very limited, so much so that at first sight all the huts seem to be continuous. The doors always open on the large street.

M 342 ●177 659 We also visited a number of villages where earthen dwellings, built by administrative order, stretched out the whole length of the village. As a rule, however, these huts, which we regard as an improvement from the standpoint of hygiene and comfort, were not favored by the natives. The Negro had carried out the task imposed upon him, but he refused to enjoy it. His primitive hut, which was better adapted to the necessities of his life, retained its appeal and its occupants.

M 361 342 Among the Tumba of the east shore of the lake, we observed that the hut tends to present certain characteristics relating it to the type of hut with an arched roof found among the Bali [Oli] and farther north. The ridge, instead of being straight, extends beyond the ends of the hut and dips down, giving the whole structure the appearance of a low bent [44] chiefly at the two ends. In certain dwellings the doors are placed in the side wall facing the main thoroughfare, and the huts are built in groups standing more or less close together. In other huts, on the other hand, the door is located in the gable wall and opens on a small veranda formed by the projecting roof front. The huts built this way are placed in a line, but are separated, and although the space between the two lines forms the chief thoroughfare of the village, each hut nevertheless boasts a small individual courtyard in front of the veranda. As to the method of construction, it is identical to those we noted in the region west of the lake.

M S 341 342 Among the peoples of the lower Lukenie, the huts are also built by the same method and with identical materials. The door, however, is nearly always in the gable wall, at the end where the roof projects, slightly curved, to form the veranda. When the huts are separated, one notices again a tendency toward an arc in the

the main axis [51] of the village. This door is always placed rather high and closes on an inner slide. Since nne-nne and ndele are lacking in this region, the framework of the huts is made of stakes and pieces of raffia, and the walls and roof are covered with raffia leaves plaited flat in the form of a mat.

The huts are built singly, a method which again reminds one of the customs of the Ochwe-Bumbuli region. The native does sometimes cover his hut with grass, but this is very rare.

In this region we also observed that in certain villages the huts were arranged in family groupings and that each group had a special area clearly set apart from the rest of the village. The various huts of a single group are inside a fairly solid stake fence from one and three-quarters to two meters high and sometimes covered with mats of raffia leaves. The doors of all the huts within an enclosure open toward the interior of the courtyard.

Fig. 33. Interior of a Lopango and Drying Peanuts, Bena Dibele-Kole Region.

The whole forms the lopango. By counting the number of huts in a lopango one may determine how many wives the chief or head of the place has, since each one has her own home. [52] The lopango are of recent introduction and are derived from Arab influence. One cannot take them into account in establishing relationships of kinship or ethnic affinity between the different peoples. There is no connection whatever between the lopango of the Bena Dibele-Kole region and the familial grouping of huts

paragraph beginning on page 97 and continued on page 98 is not translated.]

[98] On the whole, we note the following special ethnic characteristics.

1) Uniformity in the cultivation of manioc, the staple food of all of these peoples.

2) Undertaking the cultivation of maize under the influence

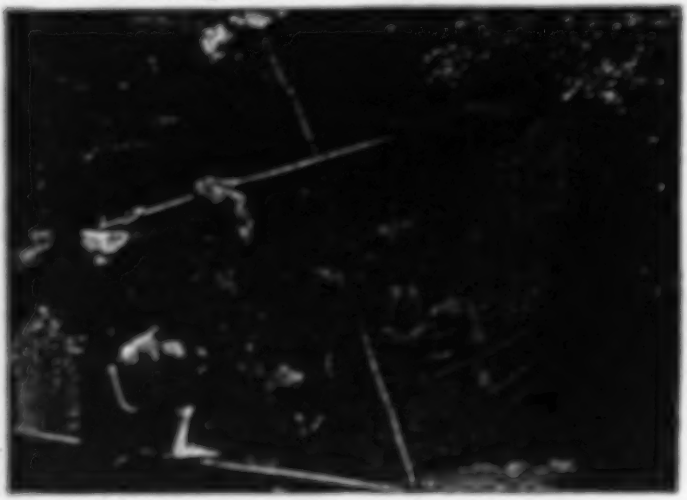

Fig. 56. Weir Fishing at a Dam among the Mosengere. Closing the Screens and Capturing the Trapped Fish.

of the ephemeral encouragement of Bula Matari [Ed., the European administration] among the peoples of the Congo-Kasai, and rice cultivation under Arab influence in the region of Bena Dibele-Kole. Contrary to what we noted concerning maize, the innovation introduced by the Arabs has become firmly implanted in the life of these natives, and the cultivation of rice will probably eliminate manioc eventually.

3) Formation of a zone of sugar-cane cultivation, the development of which is in inverse proportion to the extent of the palm groves.

4) Complete absence of animal husbandry of any importance.

5) Uniformity in the methods of communal hunting and the gradual development of attendant religious customs and practices from east to west, corresponding to a decline in hunting by individuals with traditional weapons. This fact leads us to suppose

## Making Fire

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372 The natives of the Kasai-Fimi-Lukenie region make fire in three different ways.

The Bateke and Banfummgu of the river use flint and steel; the Banfummgu of the interior, the Boboma, Mowengere, Tumba,

M
[SK]

Fig. 59.
Making Fire by Friction.

Fig. 60.
Making Fire by Rotation.

Wadia, Bassikata, Bobale, Baiesa, Ipanga, Batitu, Bokala, and some of the Yaelima use the friction method [102] or longitudinal rubbing; and the Yaelima of the east, the Bamongo-Memo, and the Bankundu of the Bena-Dibele-Kole region obtain fire by gyration or rotary rubbing.

M
● [111] The native method tends to disappear rapidly everywhere with the introduction of matches, although most of the natives have kept their primitive strike-a-light and always carry it with them on journeys. If there are no matches or if through some circumstance -- the humidity, the crossing of a river or marsh -- the matches will not work, the native takes out his strike-a-light and makes fire by the native method.

T
372 The strike-a-light of the Bateke and Banfummgu of the river consists of an iron or steel blade from three to eight centimeters long and two to three centimeters wide, a flint (a more

372 Yaelima, the apparatus consists of two small cylindrical rods. [104] One of the rods, cut from relatively soft wood, has one or more notches. The other, rounded at one end, is of hard wood. The notched rod is placed over the tinder; the other one is held perpendicularly, with the round end inserted in the notch. The native gives the latter rod a rapid rotary motion by spinning it between his hands. At the same time he slides his hands from top to bottom in order to increase the pressure as much as possible.

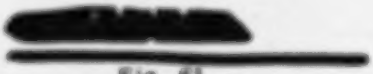

Fig. 61
Rod and Small Board with Notches.

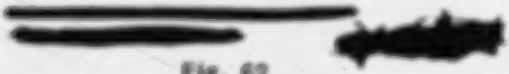

Fig. 62
Two rods, One with Notches.

The special skill consists in producing this motion with as few pauses as possible. This is why several natives usually participate. One holds the notched rod in place, a second one spins the other rod, while a third stands by ready to maintain the gyrating motion as soon as his companion reaches the bottom of the rod. The first spinner will relieve the other in turn. After several rotations, a small incandescent spot appears in the charred wood dust in the notch, and a spark falls on the tinder, which catches fire.

The areas in which these three methods of making fire are found form three distinct ethnic zones in the region visited.

The first one includes only the Batoko and part of the Banfumungu and is characterized by use of the iron blade and flint.

The second one with the system of friction or longitudinal rubbing extends from the interior of Banfumungu territory to the center of the region occupied by the Yaelima. [105]

373 The third, with the system of gyration or rotary rubbing, includes the easternmost part of Yaelima territory and the whole Bena Dibele-Kole region.

372 This last method has also been noted among the Balesa,
• 177 and we were able to verify that some of the natives in the region were familiar with it and used it. It is not indigenous to this tribe, however, and must have been introduced into the region by soldiers or laborers from the old Tolo post, who came from regions where this method was known.

It is also possible that the eastern Yaelima borrowed this method from the peoples of the south, although we were unable to obtain any precise information on this point. This hypothesis, however, is justified by the fact that we found the friction and gyration methods in certain Yaelima villages, and the natives preferred to use the latter method in every such instance. It must be noted that the gyration method is not only less tiring but also faster and permits the natives to take turns. It provides a maximum of yield for a minimum of work. There is, therefore, nothing astonishing in the fact that wherever the natives have had an opportunity to observe the advantages of this method, they have made a point of adopting it.

372 In our opinion, the friction or longitudinal rubbing method should be regarded as having been used exclusively in former times by all the tribes, from the Benfamungu to the Yaelima. This method may still be found among the tribes of the Dekese region, but, unfortunately, we were unable to substantiate this.

All these peoples in this respect would belong to the same ethnic group, which is clearly differentiated from the group of tribes in the Bena Dibele-Kole region.

## Salt

258 The preparation of salt occupies an important place in the life of certain tribes of the Kasai-Lukenie region. Lacking both salt mines and salt water in their territory, the natives proceeded to obtain this precious condiment, indispensable to the diet, by extracting it from plants. [106]

Wherever the introduction of imported products has not eliminated the native method, the extraction of salt is a veritable national industry. The whole community participates in it.

[171] Among the Betake, Benfamungu, Baboma, and part of the Wadia, the introduction of salt has completely eliminated the use and preparation of native salt.

1: Maes--140 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32
Sakata FO43

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Bracelets and anklets are relatively rare as ornaments among the Mosengere and other riparian tribes of the lake. We found them from time to time among the Bobaie and Balesa.

The elegantly dressed women of the Ipanga-Batitu and Bokala wear heavy brass rings over the ankles, brass rings on the fingers and toes, and leather belts adorned with brass beads, while the necklaces of solid brass gradually disappear as one goes eastward. Among the Yaelima and Bokala they are practically nonexistent, but the men and women like bracelets of brass wire. They wear them like a sheath from the wrist to the elbow. Except for rare exceptions, these people do not wear rings around the ankles. Some dignitaries deck themselves out with imported bead necklaces. The belt decorated with brass

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[301
P54]

Fig. 105. Two Wadia Women and a Child, Wearing Solid Brass Necklaces.

beads is rather commonly used. In the Bena-Dibele-Kole region, ornaments of copper and brass seem to be disappearing little by little as imported beads come in. Necklaces of glass beads, incidentally have been introduced throughout the region. [184] we visited. They are particularly in vogue among the Ipanga and Betitu women. The men prefer necklaces made of hair from elephants' tails, or a simple brass ring.

M
[177]

Bracelets and rings of brass are worn by men from Stanley Pool to Kole. The Bokala and Yaelima dignitaries wear rings

304 132 [[11 291] personal vanity, and to excite the male. At the present time only the latter reason accounts for the practice in the region where our influence has been effective. The introduction of European fabrics, the expansion of the economy and the progress of civilization have led the women to clothe themselves and to hide and screen a large part of the body from indiscreet glances. [189] The small primitive loincloth has given way to a toga of variable length, which hides from the public eye that part [Fig. 112 appears here] of the body which is covered with tattoos. In

[291 301 304 142]

Fig. 115. Elegant Lady of the Bokala-Yaelima Region. Tattoos, Bracelets, and Necklaces.

such cases, the woman can no longer display her tattoos for the sake of vanity. [Figs. 113 and 114 appear here] If, despite this, some of them continue to have themselves tattooed just like the old matrons, it is because they hope to attract a man, to please him, and to be able to participate sooner in the pleasures of intimate life. When questioned on this subject, the natives are very definite. The men maintain that the raised tattoos [190] on

304 133

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[825]

recollection of an animal of the leopard family which they call bokonga. Their description of it corresponds to the lion. Some soldiers and other expatriates, who were also young people, shown representations of a lion immediately identified it with their bokonga.

The groups under discussion here lived for a time on the banks of the Luwo (Maringa) and the [11] upper Ikelemba, (1) then under

[173]

1. It appears that between the Ikelemba and its tributary the Losilifa, there is still a bonkom tree called w'ãmenga (of bald heads) under which, according to tradition, the ancestors held their councils. Nearby there is a bosili whose fruits never ripen.

pressure from other Mõngo tribes, they crossed the Tshuapa-Ruki. They evicted the Ekonda and settled in their present location. This exodus must have taken place a fairly long time ago; it is impossible to determine the date and difficult to make any estimates. In any case it must have occurred 150 to 200 years ago.

214 These peoples are primarily farmers; they grow chiefly bananas, manioc, yams, colocasia [taro], sweet potatoes, sugar cane, and various vegetables and condiments. The food crops they grow, together with what they gather and the Elaeis palm trees provide them with a continuous and abundant food supply, as long as elephants do [231] not interfere. Their domestic animals include chickens, goats, and 224 dogs. (2) Hunting is a pleasant change of activity rather than an

[177]

2. Ducks have been introduced fairly recently, but they were known long before colonial times. They came from the south. Sheep have been introduced only in the last few decades, and they are found only in a few villages on the river banks in the lowlands.

291 The nkɨsɨ is unknown beyond the Jwalɛ and the Luilaka. In that re-
184 gion the women tie a string (or a belt of beads) around themselves and attach a second piece of cloth to it.

Thus the male garment is a rudimentary sort of shorts, open on
291 the sides, while female dress is much more open. In general the efufa is an appropriate protection of one's modesty, but it is inadequate in certain positions. (2)

[611]
[196]

2. It may be interesting to note that etɔ̃o nsamɨnyɨ, or just plain etɔ̃o, which is the term for a man's garment, also indicates the male line of descent, while the female line is often designated by the term nkɨsɨ (sometimes by the word jwɔ̃moto derived from bɔ̃moto, "woman"). Let us add that lonkundɔ̃ jwɨ̃ nkɨsɨ means "pure, flawless Lonkundo, not corrupted by foreign influences." This expression should be compared with the following phrases: langue maternel, moedertaal, "mother tongue," etc.

291 At present the nkɨsɨ is no longer worn except by a few elderly
177 inhabitants of villages far from the main communication lines. Everywhere else the ancient mode of dress has been replaced by materials imported from Europe. The women wear at least a sangatɨmbo, a kind of short skirt which falls from their loins at least to the middle of their thighs if not further. Middle-aged men in the interior have simply changed the material of their garment but not its form. The younger ones, on the contrary, have frankly adopted the European mode of dress.

291 A married woman is not allowed to enter the village of her rela-
581 tives by marriage (bakilɔ́) or appear before them [54] without supple-
[134] menting her usual attire with one or more lɔlɔlɔkɛ (banana leaves cut
[831] into fringes). The term bakilɔ́ must be understood as it is meant by the Nkundɔ́: it excludes those with whom the wife may sometimes perform the sexual act and who are called "husbands" broadly speaking.

535 far the most inventive tribe. All the dances have two distinguishable parts: the dance strictly speaking and the finale or ikɗeyo. The latter consists of acrobatic exhibitions or a theatrical performance. It varies with each performance and sometimes goes beyond the limits of decency, especially in certain scenes of the women's dances. Here everything depends on the attitude of the actors and spectators.

535 786 [553] The words sung are usually proper. Passages that may be less so occur only exceptionally. The exclamations of some of the male or female dancers, but mostly those of the audience when the intensity of the performance reaches a climax, are somewhat less innocent. Thus this climax [62] is the weak spot morally speaking. This is true especially of the dances performed by the women who, led on by their passion and encouraged by the cheering and applause of the spectators, make provocative movements (bitɛ́kɔ́, bembɔ́ŋjo). A European will see nothing wrong, but the native knows the gestures and their meaning. The spectators then applaud with even greater enthusiasm, either because of sexual feelings or out of aesthetic enjoyment, for to them these movements are beautiful. All the artistic dances for women which are the fashion at the present time contain a similar phase of exaggerated excitement. It is therefore understandable that in the past the elders strictly forbade children and adolescents to attend these dances.

[582] After what has just been said, no one will be astonished to hear that these great dances are often the cause of adultery and divorce. And to a limited extent the same can be said for the men's dances, for masculine beauty is exhibited in an enticing manner.

593 595 The rhythmic motions which sometimes accompany singing during drinking parties cannot really be called dances; nothing shocking is implied by them and the words of the songs are seldom improper. Salacious songs are rarely sung in the course of daily living, but they are never omitted from funeral ceremonies.

535 617 618 Up to now we have spoken of artistic dances, which are always very popular. They were -- and are -- reserved for certain special occasions. For ordinary circumstances the Nkundó have a few little entertaining dances which have nothing at all in common with the dance as such. They are more like games. The lyrics of the songs

535 may be ribald, but this occurs rather rarely. However, at the present
177 time, they are often actually obscene -- especially since "European-
831 style" dancing has been introduced, and more particularly in the centers, small and large, and among those who have come under [63] its influence. This kind of dancing for amusement is chiefly practiced by young people.

To the credit of morality it should be noted that mixed dancing is unknown to strictly native ways. It occurs in the centers (in the form of the mixed bofenya or the balinga, grotesque imitations of European dances) but is spreading -- and rapidly -- to the villages of the interior. The second variety especially raises havoc, for it has a deleterious influence on morality. It has been the cause of a number of cases of adultery, divorce, palavers, and quarrels, and has been forbidden by certain chiefs and headmen, who would like to be able to severely punish anyone who dances it.

Conclusion

834 The data presented in the foregoing section forces us to conclude that sexual modesty does exist among the Nkundó. The wearing of clothing, the various prohibitions, the attitude of the older and wiser members of the community show that they experience this feeling. It is the same here as elsewhere. In certain areas it is even carried to an extreme. The exceptions should be attributed to individual deviations; and because of the reactions they provoke, they even provide conclusive evidence. The general laxity which may be observed on some special occasions does not provide material for a serious objection against the existence of modesty. Yet it is difficult to determine the reason for such an attitude which seems to contradict the rest of our data. Should it be interpreted as a yielding to human weakness, or seen as a weakening of public morality? Or is it not rather because these special circumstances make an unfavorable interpretation of such actions impossible? An allusion made in public, in a group, [64] does not have the same significance as that same allusion may have between two people, where it implies a suspicious intimacy.

soon as her family becomes aware of her condition. The accomplice is made officially responsible and is required to accept this responsible and is required to accept this responsibility by publicly pledging his willingness to take all consequences upon himself. This pledge like all pledges is called ndanga. It consists of a knife, a ring of copper or brass, a spear, or similar objects. (2)

2. The same custom is practiced in the case of pregnancy resulting from adultery.

Article V. Sexual Intercourse

Although this subject is extremely delicate and therefore difficult to investigate and describe, it does not seem pointless to note here a few details with which I have become acquainted. We will discuss in succession a few circumstances relative to the act, then rape, and finally what are called incomplete acts. [92]

1. Circumstances relative to the act

The Nkundó have intercourse lying on their sides. Nowadays, [77] natives who have had frequent contacts with Whites are beginning to abandon the old manner for that of the Europeans. The spirit of imitation probably plays some part in the transformation which is beginning, but the gradual spread of the knowledge that the European system makes conception more likely is also a factor.

Even for illicit relations our natives seldom choose the forest or near-by palm or banana groves. Usually they prefer an isolated hut, or they take advantage of the absence of witnesses who might intrude on them. At night they are generally afraid of anything that stirs in the forest.

The Nkundó have sexual relations only during the night. To do so in the daytime would be to risk being striken by a mortal illness called bomikilí (derived from mikilí "noon;" by extension, "day").

584 A young man who renounces his fiancée places her in the hands of the ndonga, who sends her back to her family.

The woman who does not want to continue their life together leaves her fiancé, perhaps telling him and perhaps not, first goes to the ndonga and then returns to her parents (nowadays she sometimes does not see the ndonga, although not doing so must be considered an infraction of the rule).

In practice she may also go directly to another man. Formerly it was dangerous to do so, since a war could result, and such an action was considered against the law. At the present time the greater freedom resulting from colonization has eliminated the dangers involved. Thus this lack of proper procedure has become more frequent and is even coming to be recognized as normal.

584 583 In any case, even if the woman has neglected to go to the ndonga, the latter is sent by the fiancé to examine the situation and to claim restitution of the payments that have already been made.

Strictly speaking, the breaking of the engagement consists in the restitution of the ikulé-ndanga through the mediation of the ndonga. But, as we will explain more fully in the chapter on divorce, gifts given by the woman's family are deducted. [125] Complete restitution of everything must be made. The woman's family cannot even invoke the work done by their daughter for the husband's benefit.

583 177 584 Nowadays, however, the custom of dividing the amount of the bride price in excess of the nkomf (1) is taking hold. The woman's

1. See below, Article VII.

parents demand a certain indemnity because they consider that the husband has lost the right to his valuables; if they do not withhold them altogether, it is because of the respect and embarrassment they feel toward the ndonga, who is related to the fiancé as he is to them.

The natives try to explain this change in the ancestral law as follows:

1) An engagement is meant to develop into a regular marriage, and that is its only validity. The fiancé's right to the woman's work

584 is based solely on the nature of this state, which is a direct prepara-
583 tion for married life. Therefore, if the union is not completed, the
177 fiancé is enriched at the expense of the parents-in-law.

2) When an engagement is broken, the parents lose the legitimate and normal expectation of a full bride price; they consider this loss lucrum cessans.

584 The natives' justification is not sufficient to explain the origin
583 of the change, however, for:

1) It seems likely that the Nkundó have simply imitated the
174 practice of other peoples of the Congo with whom they have become
177 acquainted since colonization, and that their explanation is but an explanation of convenience.

2) The reasons invoked in favor of the change are not new; they were equally valid in the past, and such as they are and in themselves they are therefore insufficient.

3) If we examine the reason concerning the benefit that the fiancé derives from the [126] woman's work, we find that it is based on a fallacious argument. For Nkundó law recognizes, on the one hand, the legitimacy of this gain and, on the other, the right of each party to break the engagement. Simply the breaking of the engagement cannot, therefore, result in the payment of an indemnity, since one cannot possibly be punished for having made use of a right.

4) The above objection is also applicable to the second reason given by the Nkundó: the possibility of the bride price not being paid is inherent in the essence of the engagement, since both parties are free not to go through with the union.

Thus the reasons given as such must be rejected.

Nevertheless, it is possible that modern circumstances have to some extent modified the nature of the problem. Thus:

1) The introduction of European wage labor and trade has given the Blacks a new idea of wealth. Consequently, the benefits reaped from the engagement have become much greater (through the development of trade and the availability of more varied goods and greater riches), and therefore the economic value of a woman has increased in considerable proportions.

Theoretically, these changes might justify some indemnification. In practice, however, economic development has increased the

583 amount of the engagement payment and thus counterbalances the in-
584 crease of the profit brought by a woman.
174 Indemnification for economic reasons would also have one
177 good result, namely that it would prevent a possible slowing of the system into a form of exploitation which would consist of taking fiancées for a time when they are needed for some special work and sending them back when the work is finished. [127]

But it must be noted that though the precaution may be good in itself, it is not called for under present circumstances, for the Nkundó do not even think of such a corruption of engagement customs.

2. Colonization has considerably reinforced -- or perhaps even introduced -- in native thinking the idea that the favour of a woman deserve a salary. I think that these circumstances have contributed much more to the origin of the new practice than economic changes -- or rather, that the justification for it is primarily based on this idea of venal love. And in that case we have before us a pretium nupti of a sort that could foster prostitution, and which is therefore in opposition to morality and public order.

Just as we must applaud the normal development of the custom and its adaptation to the possibilities of social and moral elevation that colonization has created, so we must react against its corruption, aberrations, deviations, and a drift toward the exploitation of faults and vices.

Another objection against the innovation may be made on the grounds of its inconsistency within Nkundó law. Since there is no indemnification in the case of divorce, how is it possible to accept it in the case of the breaking of an engagement, which is a much weaker commitment than marriage itself? It is true that a Nkundó engagement is almost a marriage, since it includes cohabitation, etc.; nevertheless, it is not as tight a bond as a permanent union, from which it is clearly distinguished. The new custom leads logically to the conclusion that it is preferable to complete the union and make it definitive by paying the entire bride price and then to break it by means of a real divorce, which does not involve this financial law.

Finally, although an indemnity based on the increase in the fiancé's profit from the engagement cannot be [128] condemned as

877 unjust in itself, it certainly becomes so if it is considered a penalty
389 inflicted for the rupture. For the indemnity is restricted to the man,
179 whether or not he is in the wrong. Furthermore, to accept an indemnity
•177 even when the engagement is broken because of the woman tends to
favor frauds and real swindles on the part of the woman and her parents,
in short a kind of traffic in women.

[58] It is also evident that the rich (polygamists) suffer much less
[179] from the innovation than do monogamous men, especially those who
adopt monogamy as a principle and there especially the Christians,
who do not condone divorce. That I am of the opinion that the de-
sire to defend polygamy against the doctrine of the missionaries is
not entirely unrelated to the transformation of this custom.

000 All these considerations show that the question is highly com-
plex and that it would be better if the ancient custom were restored.

If the breaking of the engagement is due to wrongs, the new
custom could perhaps be tolerated, though it is not without serious
dangers, but the indemnity should be imposed exclusively on the
party at fault. Furthermore, the wrongs would have to be serious,
and on the other hand, the indemnity would have to be, not in the
nature of a forfeit, but of a payment of damages commensurate with
the extent of the damage suffered and the seriousness of the wrong.
And here those cases should especially be considered where the
breaking of the engagement is accompanied by proceedings of a vexa-
tious and insulting nature. And though it is a very delicate task to
evaluate all these elements, we must not forget to take them into
account.

It seems to me that the ancient law must still be maintained
when the engagement is broken simply because of a change of feelings
for which neither party is to blame, if such a case occurs. For it
is better not to intervene than to intervene too often. [1931]

Article IV. Wale -- bombolisky

93[6] The wale or bombolisky is the bulk of the bride price paid for
a marriage. Between the payment of the ndonga and that of the wale,

2. The nature of wolo valuables

The wolo primarily consists of copper and brass rings. Wrought metal objects (bifeko), such as spears, knives, or axes are also added. Nowadays a part may be made up of simple brass or iron (steel) bars. Goats may be given in addition: a she-goat is worth 5 to 6 rings (nowadays 10), and a he-goat, 3 to 4 bahonga (nowadays 6 to 7). One or more olifofé bells are greatly prized as gifts.

Payment in iron or copper chains (bongé-nyola), in various kinds of bead necklaces, and in leopard's teeth has almost entirely disappeared. Formerly, certain kinds of beads had great value; the big, round bluish-white ones (lotyofuya, pl. motyofuya) were worth 1 konga each, the big, oblong blackish ones, cylindrical or rectangular in shape, 2 to 3 centimeters in diameter and 5 to 10 centimeters long (called oléngé) were worth one slave or, nowadays, 20 to 25 bahonga each.

Copper (konga) and brass (lifuma) are the most important of all. Thus paying the bride price is often referred to as fuga la lifuma la konga.

The statement by R.P. Kaptein (in Congo, 1922, Vol. 1, pp. 432-443) that original valuables were the benkata, the bingetele, and the mitako is based on an error. [132] The first two types of valuables, also called bwolongo by some tribes, were used exclusively by the chiefs of Lake Tumba and the adjacent Ekonda (Bosanga, Balinga, Lomyanyanga, etc.). The mitako, known in Lonkundo as mpolo, singular lompolo, are not native; this monetary unit was introduced by the Independent State.

The practice of making the payment at least partially in money or in objects of European origin (such as fabrics, blankets, sewing machines, trunks, household utensils, etc.) is gradually being introduced. Before the crisis it was already very popular among "white people."

3. The source of the valuables

A young man obtains the valuables for the bride price in various ways. The most usual way and the one which also conforms best to the Nkundó's familial and social regulations is the use of valuables

583 431 One must be careful not to confuse this boongo with byiko bya nyang'ó'ýna, an expression frequently heard. The latter includes any payment to the mother and includes the goat and the nkando as well as the boongo discussed above and others. The word used in this case is not byiko, singular iko, "porcupine," but rather byiko, singular wiko, "price, value" and derived from the verb -ika, "to set a price."

3) Lokolé: a brother or a cousin of the wife asks for a konga. He beats the gong (lokolé) in order to make noise and thus force the husband to satisfy him. That is how this boongo seems to have originated. In practice people simply demand a [147] present. The racket can sometimes last for quite a while. But the elders do not allow the gathering to be disrupted if the husband does not have precisely the gift that would give satisfaction.

4) Bakulé, or bontwé: the woman's brothers stick a piece of the trunk of a banana tree (bontwé) into the ground, so that young relatives of the husband may shoot arrows (bakulé) at it. These are then removed by young members of the wife's family who, at the present time, are sometimes given money -- 5 francs, for instance.

[283] [727] 5) Wambé: prisoner's rope, that is, a rope to which war prisoners were formerly tied, two by two (a system now imitated for prisoners of the colonial law enforcement agencies and administration). In the past the patriarch, or head of the family, demanded a konga or a knife as indemnity against the possibility that he or members of his family might be imprisoned as a result of a war caused by the woman being married. Nowadays the chiefs set up by the administration and [171] [621] given the rights of family heads by the European authority have also claimed rights to this boongo whose significance, purpose, and even name have completely changed as a result. It is now called bonyélé w'ónkonji, "the chief's chain." It is clear that this payment has become something which it was not meant to be.

6) Etéka: a heavy wooden fork, fastened to the neck. This is a present claimed by the mother, by one of the father's other wives, or by a wife of the woman's brother, against the possibility that they may have to undergo torture by means of the fork because of the women whose bride price is being paid. This could happen if she were

end in his hand and offers the other to the husband, saying, "Take-it." The husband naturally refuses and extricates himself by means of a knife or a piece of copper. [148]

11) Bofongo w'Eyas, or "weeds." These are demanded by some clans because the husband's clan scoffs at them on account of the number of weeds and chaff they allow to grow in their village instead of keeping it clean. One or two rings are given.

12) Engumbá: known in some groups, such as the Bokfale, where it is the last one demanded. It is a bofongo of authority. (1)

1. An engumbá is a temporary hut in a newly settled village. The family patriarchs are the first who must go and live there in order to urge the others to follow and to exorcise all the evil of possible magic spells.

claimed by the patriarchs of the families belonging to the grouping from which the woman has come. Formerly, the amount went as high as 3 to 5 bakonga, depending on the number of families, groups of families, or clans related through marriage that were living in the same village. Now the payment is made primarily in European currency, and the amount may be 50 francs, for example. This bofongo is later divided among the various kin groupings related to the wife's family.

Various male and female relatives of the woman ask for assorted small objects, such as a small knife (ilóka), a native razor (lotáfi), a pin for braiding hair (bokingó), a needle (mongí), a necklace of blue beads (bingongóla), etc.

Nowadays many other objects are also demanded: clothing, dishes, etc. Thus, one day on the occasion of a single bride-price payment, I heard demands for the following objects:

For the father, a pair of trousers and a jacket, because when the woman was a young child she soiled his clothing without troubling herself about the matter.

For the mother, a bed, because worries about her daughter often kept her from resting.

583* For an aunt, a basin, because she had washed the child.
431 For a brother, a pair of shoes or slippers, because the girl had worn his shoes during the courtship, etc., etc. [150]

All these bofuga are included in the sum total of the bride price. Should the occasion arise, they must be returned with the rest.

In addition to the bofuga asked for and received by the women's relatives, others are demanded by members of the husband's family. As in the case of the former each person voices his claims according to his desires and without any predetermined order but must always do so through the ndonga. The gifts chiefly consist of furs of the [93] esfie otter, the lifka monkey, bonkfng and yeyei felines, a joint of game (money, antelope, etc.), a mat, a pot, a hunting net, a carrying bag (bokfimbf), a bead necklace, etc. Nowadays there may [91] also be various items introduced by the Europeans: items of clothing, fabrics, saucepans, dishes, etc. This category of bofuga is included in the sum total of the nkomf (see the following article). If the nkomf is given immediately, the parties proceed with this payment. Then the ndonga(s) are remunerated as stated above: each party gives him at least 2 rings.

Finally, the woman's father says to the husband: "In any case, be on your way; we will collect the nkomf and bring it to you." Whereupon the husband leaves; if he prefers to wait for his wife he remains, and returns home when the items of the nkomf have been collected.

## Article VII. Nkomi

Nkomf is the name for the objects which the wife's family gives to the husband. The term lilonga is also sometimes used. The [92] Ngiffi say likoma, the Wlongwe, Bokfofo, Inongo, and Bokuf say likomi. All these words are derived from the same verb -koma, "to wrap up, to make a package." (1) For the nkomf valuables are

1. The Bjôrô say lilonga from the verb -longa, which has the same meaning as -koma.

generally packed in baskets or [151] in hampers (or hampes), which are baskets woven of palm leaves.

Some ethnologists have introduced the expression dowaire, "dowry," (1) to designate the goods given by the woman's family to

1. See for example Tuesday, in Africa, Vol. 2, no. 3, p. 278.

the man's family. Actually, the word dot would be a much better translation, because it corresponds more closely to the nature of these payments. But this would require changing the terminology adopted, and the introduction of another term (such as marriage payment) for what is generally understood by the word dot, whose use is in any case unfortunate. [Translator's note: Hulstaert uses dot, which would literally be translated into English as "dowry," to designate the payments made by the husband and his family to the wife's family. However, I have employed the term "bride price" in accordance with the usage of English-speaking anthropologists.]

Furthermore, the word dowaire already has a precise and accepted meaning, so that its use in this context would lead to confusion. That is why I prefer provisionally to use an entirely new term, and to translate nkumf as counte-dot [literally, counter-dowry]. (2)

2. This term was suggested to me by Attorney General A. Sohier.

[Translator's note: The term "dowry" has been used to designate this payment in the translation.]

The nkumf consists of love, ducks (3), salt, mats, pots, goods

3. Ducks have been introduced fairly recently; the Nkundo maintain that their ancestors did not have any, and that they got them from the Ekonda. In their classification they place them under the category of chickens.

of our peoples. Its pure and simple abolition would upset their established order completely. First their mentality has to change, and that end can be accomplished only gradually, since a moral change is involved. And the present state of these peoples is not sufficiently evolved for the abolition of the bride price to be beneficial. Here, if ever, the axiom: nihil lege sine moribus is valid.

But what might perhaps be done in that direction now is to place a limitation on the amount of the bride price. This measure should be strictly enforced to make sure that it is carried out -- although in practice its enforcement would be very difficult, for at the beginning [1950], many interested parties would try to circumvent it. If good results are to be obtained, an efficacious repression of adultery and the frequency of divorce should accompany the limitation on the bride price. It would be a first step towards the ideal. Others could follow according to the extent of the natives' evolution toward a higher level of morality.

Apropos of these considerations we should like to say a few words concerning:

3. Traffic in bride prices

This term may be taken to mean two different things. It may be used to refer to a general increase in the amount of the bride price, which has reached enormous proportions since the European penetration of the area. Or it may refer to the increase in the bride price of a single woman for successive marriages, from which her family profits.

The first meaning of the term refers to a fact, namely that the amount of the bride price has increased considerably. The reason for this development is the increase in material wealth resulting from colonization. Riches are more easily acquired. But we should not exclude the role of the greed of many persons, which has also increased. It is the most important and can reach scandalous proportions in areas where the bride price is paid in European goods (money, fabrics, appliances, utensils); in such regions, as for example among the riverain people of the Lower Congo, it goes up to and easily exceeds 3,000 francs. Think of what this amount represents, especially in times of economic depression. (1)

1. For the sake of comparison, here are some average figures for 1936:

| | |
|---|---|
| Wages . . . . . | fr. 20.00 to 25.00 |
| Copal, per kilogram . . . | 0.50 to 0.70 |
| Palmettos . . . . . | 0.10 to 0.20 |
| Palm nuts . . . . . | 0.05 to 0.10 |

Inevitably the action of one man leads another to follow suit for -- need I repeat? -- everything is interdependent.

Another reason may be, and sometimes is, involved. It is the desire [181] of a husband to bind a woman more securely to him by paying a lot for her. This is certainly a praiseworthy feeling, especially considering the women's readiness to resort to divorce. In practice, however, is full of dangers. If it is limited to an isolated case, that is, to a single monogamist who gives his entire fortune for his only wife, the danger is minimal. Such is the case of one of our catechists who paid an enormous amount, without its having the slightest repercussion on his region. But the danger is very great if a man does this to establish a harem, especially if for that purpose he entices the wives of others. Thus, for instance, a man to whom the administration gave great political powers caused a fantastic increase in the general bride price among the Ekunda of the north. (1)

1. One factor which helped increase the bride price among the Wangata and other tribes in the vicinity of Coquilhatville has been described by Father Kaptein in Congo, 1922, Vol. 1, p. 544. Since his study is written in Dutch, I think it would be useful if I translated the whole text here:

"When the first Europeans arrived at Leopoldville and Brazzaville, fabrics and other European articles soon made their appearance in Coquilhatville. The chiefs Yoma of Boyeka, Ibula of Boyere (Boyela), Yambe of Eala; Nkalo of Bokala, etc., went up the Tshuapa and Ikelemba rivers and, by means of these goods, bought slaves, women, and ivory.

583 "When they returned home, they ac-
177 quired wives in their region and paid for them with the slaves and women they had purchased cheaply by means of European products. They paid three or four slave women for a wife in their region. The arrival of the Whites and of foreign Blacks taught them the number nkoi (10,000), a word which they thought meant 1,000 and which in the past they had called 10 nkoto or 10 x 100.

"The European soon became involved in native palavers concerning women. This was inevitable in the Black Country. When the [192] Blacks brought their palavers before the Whites they either did not want or did not dare to say:

'I paid for this woman with 3 other women'; they would say, 'I paid for this woman with 3 nkoi of mitako,' that is, 3 x 1,000 mitako. In the meantime, the words nkoto and nkoi acquired their significance of 1,000 and 10,000 respectively. But people continued to say that a woman had been paid for with nkoi through either an error of the Whites, or the greed of polygamists, or both. Later, several women actually were paid for with nkoi, especially when the mitako became the official currency of the Congo. Actually, this development was not surprising, since the polygamists had a monopoly on women, and it was very much in their interest to increase the price.

"Formerly the price of wives was no higher in Wangata than elsewhere. Only 5 bekonga were paid for many wives, for instance, at Bokala near Bamanya, a village under the jurisdiction of Chief Tome of Boyeka."

583a. 177 It would be good to counteract that much increase in bride prices. For there is a danger that it will condemn to bachelorhood many young men who could otherwise build a home out of the fruits of their own labor. [182]

583a. 586a. The second meaning of the term "traffic in bride prices" has a more precise application. After a divorce all the valuables must be returned to the husband. Consequently, the new husband must pay at least as much as the first, and in general he even has to add a supplement for the family who, after all, have incurred expenses for the palaver. And so it continues. Thus the more husbands a woman has in succession, the more her bride price increases. It seems to me that this practice is in no way to be condemned. The increase is reasonable. For it not only constitutes some compensation to the woman's family for their troubles but, in addition it may exercise a good influence on the social condition of the people. If it is to have such an influence, divorce must not become a means of satisfying greed (in general, at the present time, it has not yet become such a means), and the increase must not be excessive.

000 In such cases the increase in the bride price can thus have a wholesome effect on the morality and stability of marriages by making men afraid of marrying a divorcée and, as a result, making women more cautious and less flighty. Here everything depends on caution, restraint, and supervision on the part of responsible authorities. [183]

4. The reason for the existence of the bride price

583a. 177 This is a question which should not be asked of the natives; they do not know how to answer it. Nor do the facts provide any certainty. All that can be attempted is the construction of a hypothesis which fits the reality.

The following explanatory theories have been put forward: that it is a compensation to the woman's family for the loss of a member (see, for example, Seitz in Africa, Vol. 8, p. 85, and also Tordey in Africa, Vol. 2, p. 275, under "Exchange"); that it is a payment for fecundity; and finally, that it is a guarantee of the

men although their first marriage has not been broken and no new marriage agreement has been concluded.

The data given above provides no confirmation in the Nkundó tribes under study of the statement made by Engels "Les Wangata [The Wangata]," Revue congolaise, 1910, p. 31) that among the Wangata "her husband can exchange her . . . she can make no protest." (1)

1. The Ekonda apply the term lisungá only to an exchange of daughters or sisters. They have a specific term: mpfungá. Note, by the way, that certain Mbóli tribes who practice a true wife exchange designate it by the same name: impfungá.

## Article VII. Purchase

The purchase of women is not practiced by the Nkundó tribes under discussion here nor even by the Bombwanja. The practice is to be found only among the Elingá. What is involved is not a marriage by means of a bride price but a real purchase; that is, a man buys a woman from her husband for a certain sum. He does not go through the woman's parents, as in an ordinary marriage by bride-price payment, but addresses himself directly to the husband.

In general it is the woman who makes the proposal that a man buy her in this manner. Sometimes a man wants to take a woman and first comes to an agreement with her. Before the Europeans arrived such a situation generally led to a war between clans or villages. After an arminice the palaver was settled, and the [211] purchaser paid the husband. Nowadays, since the Nkundó no longer dare to fight because of the legal sanctions that inevitably follow, when a woman abandons her husband for another man who wants to buy her, the parties involved bring the palaver before the judges. As the woman wants only her new husband, and so, on the other hand, war and the punishment of women have been abolished, the first husband has no

their sense of the personal injustice involved. But they do not reason out these feelings; they follow them spontaneously, blindly.

There is a greater awareness of the social evil in adultery. But it is based not on the philosophical considerations of this term in itself, but on the consequences of individual cases for the proper functioning of society -- palavers, financial difficulties, enmities, quarrels, wars.

This it seems to me is the present state of their ideas. It does not preclude the possibility that the law and sanctions against adultery may rest on an ultimate basis of moral ideas. And more particularly it is quite possible that the moral idea [331] operates only in the form of a feeling of the great principles of fundamental natural law which is innate to all human reason.

3) No one will be astonished if we say that colonization, far from reducing the frequency of adultery, actually contributed to its considerable increase. The abolition of native penalties and punishments together with a great freedom of movement could not help but lead, naturally, to this state of affairs. Every informed colonial who is in close contact with the natives is aware of the situation. "The prohibition of corporal punishments which, according to custom, were the sanctions imposed against a woman's adultery have brought about a license whose extent can be measured by the degree to which a group is subject to our occupation. The forgetfulness if not the contempt for the premises of marriage is nowhere carried so far as in places where the customary disciplines have been completely removed." (Mbj. Engels, Bulletin Gen. Belge. Et. Col., cited in Congo, 3rd year, Vol. 1, p. 77, April, 1922). That is why various persons have repeatedly called for sanctions against adultery to replace the ancestral means of repression that have been abolished.

But the decrees hoped for have never passed beyond the stage of mere projects. Fortunately, another step, and a fundamental one, has been taken in the meantime through the establishment of native jurisdiction (1908). Under the guidance and control of European authorities, native courts will turn the helm halfway back to the ancient sanctions, adapting them all the while to the new conditions created by colonization and by the introduction of more humanitarian

ideas. Nevertheless, great care must be exercised not to go to extremes in introducing these ideas to the point where a society only just beginning to emerge from a pagan barbarism because of the presence of a civilization based on Christianity, is treated as an equal of European communities. Native society must evolve gradually and harmoniously. Rushing is often synonymous with breaking, and it is always a [ XXX] great mistake. And in the matters under discussion, the abolition of sanctions which, in spite of their imperfection and their inadequacy for fulfilling the whole task, have been shown to have a real efficacy, has removed all the coercive power of Nkundó law. A sentimental and excessive humanitarianism must yield before the native society's right to respect for its vital institutions -- unless these are entirely to be condemned -- and therefore before the necessity for severe punishments which it cannot do without for the moment. For our natives are not yet ready for a complete abolition of their summary sanctions, since they still lack a new foundation that would replace their fear of the ancient penalties. Let us therefore take care not to take all means of punishment away from husbands and wives, even if they seem somewhat violent from our viewpoint. Finally, there is no sense in overstressing a respect for members of the weaker sex, who by their very nature sometimes need punishment for the greater good of the whole community. Moreover, as for this respect, our Nkundó do not understand it at all; the way we conceive of it is entirely opposed to their mentality and their laws. Therefore, everything will work out more easily if the native courts are given sufficient latitude to act in the spirit of their ancestral law and if their activity is guided by a constant, informed, and sympathetic control whose sole aim is the healthy evolution of native society.

If it is applied within these limits and under these conditions, Nkundó law can redress many wrongs and help to save native society from the abyss into which it is in danger of falling. In spite of its faults and imperfections, it is preferable not only to the system of freedom (or licence) which has reigned for many years, but also to

from her personally; she attaches herself to her relative and follows her in her marital union."

The name *ebisa*, as well as the functions involved, may be improperly extended to a relative who is fetched by a woman so that she may become the wife not of her husband, but of one of his relatives. Sometimes she is even intended for a man who belongs to another clan, which is related by marriage, but for whom there is prohibition on marriage with the first clan. For instance, Boliimbé w'Ofowa of Elaka (Lokonge) came to fetch her sister Longé for Bompata w'Isalema, who belonged to the Bofilolo clan which, like her husband's clan (Bombéngé), was part of the village of Bosombé.

## Article V. Slave Women

In times past a polygamist could have one or several slaves in his harem whom he treated as wives. They were war prisoners whom he himself had captured, or had bought from others, or received as [ 314] bondings. As a rule no bride price was paid for them, and in leaving, they retained their status of slaves. This fact did not prevent a husband from loving them like real wives. But their rivals respected them less and, especially on the occasion of quarrels and disputes, reminded them of their inferiority.

Since slavery has been abolished by colonization, many former slaves have returned to their respective families. Others, on the contrary, have not wanted to take advantage of the freedom granted them and have preferred to remain faithful. In such cases the husband paid the usual bride price for them with all the appropriate formalities. Only recently (1932) Ilolf, a Bokondé man (Bonjoko) thus paid a bride price of 63 bokonga to his wife Xmbé's family. Xmbé was originally from Bokaké (Bokongé) but had been abducted at the beginning of the European occupation. Ilolf had inherited her from Bokéwonga of the Bosélé bikongé (Bonkoso) thanks to the intervention of his great-uncle Mpoté who had paid 7 rings on his behalf as the customary bompéngé called ndéwongé.

595 § 3) And it is not difficult to understand this fact. For indeed polygamy constitutes a legitimate and easy means by which a man may enjoy several women without being bothered by palavers, difficulties, etc. The mentality of many men who care little about moral laws as well as the tendency of a disordered instinct to multiply its objects only confirm this observation. Often one sees men who were monogamists at first begin by taking a second wife out of passion. Then gradually their passion becomes greater rather than appeased, and so a harem is built up progressively.

595 118 The changes introduced by colonization in the economic life of this people have not resulted in a decrease of polygamy. In the absence of exact figures we must be satisfied with simple visual observations, but in certain regions one has the impression that the harems have become smaller but, on the other hand, that the number of polygamists has increased, and therefore [ 371] the desire for polygamy, that is, its affective cause, has [65] not diminished. Nor does the extra tax frighten or stop the polygamists. The great means for changing the Nkundó attitude in this realm will always be the action of the missions and the penetration of Christian ethics, seconded by a government attitude favoring monogamy. (1)

[645] 1. The favorable attitude of the colonial government toward monogamy is expressed chiefly in the permission given to a polygamist's extra wives to abandon their husband in order to contract a monogamous union, preferably in a mission, under the supervision of missionaries.

[77] Another means, undoubtedly secondary but still important, is the example of European couples. The Blacks are imitative, and native women envy the lot of the white woman, so that European households are propaganda for monogamy when they behave well.

2: Hulstaert--389 M-5 (ca. 1930) 1938 FOS2 Mongo FOS2
Nkundo

## Article VI

### Magic Practices Pertaining to Divorce

It seems to me not without interest to devote a few lines to the magic practices prevalent among our peoples and used on the occasion of divorce. We are not speaking of love philters; strictly speaking they would not be appropriate here. (1) We will therefore

1. See Chapter I, Part 2, Article VIII.

limit ourselves to giving a general idea of the practices used to prevent a wife from leaving her husband, to avenge a divorce, or to make a fugitive return.

As we shall see, these objectives often become intertwined.

1) The trinity *ndjɛlɛ-nsɔŋ-ntɔmbɛ* is considered by the natives as three related practices. We see it more as three forms of a single practice.

All three originated with the Ntɔmbɛ of Lake Tumba and were introduced to the Nkundɔ -- directly or indirectly -- by certain Ekonda tribes living between the two peoples. This introduction took place in modern times. The practices were unknown here before colonization. Even at the present time they have not spread everywhere; they have not yet crossed the Maringa. The chronological order of their introduction is first *ndjɛlɛ*, second *nsɔŋ*, third *ntɔmbɛ*.

The animating spirit of these practices is the leopard. Their primary purpose is to call back an unfaithful wife and, if she obstinately refuses to kill her or her seducer. Secondarily, they also serve to cause the death of any enemy whatever, especially in reprisal.

The three practices differ with respect to their manufacture and method of use. We cannot go into all the relevant details, for they are outside the framework of this study. [418] It is sufficient to say that the owner of the charm to whose powers he resorts first calls the woman by blowing into an antelope horn,

especially very early in the morning at the crowing of the cock.(1)

1. The natives also use this means to call their children who long ago left for the "lowlands" and whose return they ardently desire.

If the one who is called does not return, the charm will take revenge either on her or on her lover, depending on the desire of the person operating it. Another intervention on his part is then required, however, and it varies according to the form used. Note that according to the native view it is impossible for the wife not to hear the call, no matter how far away she may be. If she does not return, it is because she is being obstinate and deserves to be punished.

The spirit of vengeance alone is involved in:

2) The nguudi. This charm comes from the Coquilhatville region or even further away. The word nguudi is the Lolingá form of the Lonkundó word ekpudi, which means "gavial." The teeth of this reptile actually play a part in its composition. It is used to punish any thief by death. Therefore it has been declared effective against anyone who tries to seduce the wife of another. It will cause the culprit's feet to swell and to open with pus. Like the above practices, this one has not yet caused blindness.

Such usages like many others have therefore been recently introduced. Before the arrival of Europeans in these parts, only love philters were known. However, it is easily understandable that the Nkundó gladly and confidently received these new practices which are so useful -- in their opinion -- and operate in a domain of capital importance for which colonization has deprived them of their ancient sanctions and means of prevention. [417]

In order to facilitate the flowing out of all the blood, the mother is given hot baths. However, they are not begun before noon, for the Nkundó say that in the morning and evening it is too cold and the blood is not sufficiently fluid. Those who have been in greater contact with the Whites give the mother beer or wine to drink. The hot baths are administered behind the hut in an enclosure set up for the occasion. They are of two kinds: baths by sprinkling (bompélo wá mákomba) and steam baths (bompélo w'Ekóngó). For the first method [685] very hot water is used, and by using a bunch of palms, the women's abdomen, loins, and ribs are sprinkled. In the second method a pit is dug and large leaves (or a basin) containing boiling water are placed in it. Three or four strong, wide sticks are placed on top, and the woman is seated on them. She is wrapped in several mats to which, today, one or two blankets are added. She is left thus exposed to the action of the steam for several minutes. According to the natives, it is the ideal system because it makes all the blood come out, or almost all. Some people first give a sprinkle bath, and then follow it with a steam bath. others are satisfied with one or the other, depending on the circumstances. In any case more than one bath is never given in one day. This cure may be given for one or two weeks, or it may stop after two or three days. The effect of "civilizing" is more inclined to the latter. But no Nkundó would want to omit the baths, for the woman's life is at stake.

After the bath the woman is carefully rubbed and dried, and then anointed with oil mixed with red paint.

From time to time, usually every second day, she is given a douche.

As long as the mother remains weak, a large fire is maintained in her hut to keep her warm, and the doors are closed by means of palms. The husband and his relatives fetch the firewood. But the first log must be cut and brought by the husband who, to use the Nkundó expression, must "remove the violence" (lóusia lofoti). In the beginning the woman lies down on a bolóngo right near the fire. She turns the front of her body toward it. The fire plays a great role in her quick recovery. She is very well cared

945 puberty, by his father. The performance of this rule entails continence (bokoka) for the person who undertakes it, even with respect to the spouse. A violation of this rule prevents healing of the wound or at least makes the process very long and difficult. (1)

[155] 1. A similar bokoka applies to anyone nursing a large gangrenous ulcer (wâlâ).

The foreskin that has been cut off is dried on the bolôlô (tray or shelf). Then no one bothers with it any longer, and it usually remains there, dusty and dirty, for an indefinite period of time if the rats leave it alone.

In the centers the young people are beginning to neglect
• [171] the native skilled in circumcising and resort instead to European surgeons.

Circumcision is not an occasion for feasts or ceremonies.
[56] Sometimes a man who is rich and vain will give a feast, but this is not at all a common practice.

The term "to circumcise" is translated in Lonkundo as ofus lɔnyɔ, "to cut off the foreskin." The less vulgar term and one used much more frequently is ofus nɔlɔnɔ, "to cut off the tip." A much too decent circumlocution is ofus lɔnkɔ, "to cut off the ear."

The reason for this custom has already been given in Chapter I, Part II, Article II, 2.

## Article VIII. Education

From an early age a Nkundó child must perform various
946 small services for his parents, especially in the household; he is
947 asked to draw water, fetch firewood, take care of a little brother or sister, etc. The demands for such services are addressed chiefly to girls, but boys are not at all exempt. By the very nature of things, however, the latter are less frequently asked to help.

Quite early a boy may accompany his father on trips, at meetings, legal debates, etc. The father makes a bow and arrows for him and teaches him the art of using them. The great pastime

6) The parent's opposition to reprimands by strangers is even greater as a general rule. They try to cover up and justify the faults of their progeny, whom they will fiercely defend. The children naturally know all this and take advantage of it.

7) The polygamous household, with all its rivalries among co-wives, cannot but accentuate all such [114] adverse effects on the children's education. The conflicts, spiteful comments, palavers, etc., are easily extended to the children. And each wife defends her own.

8) Everything is public; there are no secrets; everything is known, seen, and heard. People do not restrain themselves and the presence of children does not stop the flow of insults and obscenities which anger provokes. The young people see many things it would be better for them not to know. They are present at domestic quarrels and are witnesses to dimensions. All this is increased by life outdoors, in the street, and by the thinness of partitions.

9) Another factor is added nowadays: the facility of communications and the presence of European stations. Boys can always run away and find shelter with the Whites or their native employees. The girls seek out kinswomen who live at such stations, even though they must help a little with the housework, in the hope of later enjoying a greater freedom and living in luxury. Parental influence and authority are naturally weakened as a result.

10) Finally, Nkundu education lacks any solid basis, any religion or religious morality. Everything is based on natural, physical fear: the fear of punishments (physical or based on superstition), harmful consequences of bad actions (sickness, difficulties, fines, indemnities, sometimes the shame of being caught -- as in theft). It is especially this lack of religious motivation that makes their moral education bear so little fruit. As the Nkundu are accustomed to this imperfect state, they do not feel the need for such a foundation. That is why it is so difficult to instill any moral conscience into them. The patient and persevering action of the great Christian truths with their instructions for moral formation (uninterrupted preaching, confession, prayer) are needed to endow

Although even Dr. Thomas teaches that the only natural authority is that of the head of the family, European legislation has, through ignorance, completely abolished the rights of the native family head, the wife is freed from all ties and is thus abandoned to licentiousness. Through a legal fiction, clan law has gone over into the hands of the "recognized native courts of justice," which, however, have just as much to do with the clan court as a policeman with a father. The communication of trade, education, and the rearing of the young, as is demonstrated to us by Russia, would revolutionize our society far less than our installation of these so-called native courts of justice has done in the Congo. Education and connection have been replaced by punishment. Politics, which have begun to play such an all-important role in our society, had /155/ almost no importance in Nkundo society. The neighboring clans were all connected with each other through blood relationship, intermarriage, or friendship ties. Only when there was a struggle against a foreign and common enemy did politics have a role to fulfill. And then the same order of rank was observed among the clans as was already indicated for the members of a single clan.

Here also, biased or romantic products of our ideas about barbarism have adapted these so-called intertribal wars to the need that we felt, to civilize the natives at any cost. These wars were not to be compared with our European wars, in which a mass of people are slaughtered. In the Congo, no sooner had wounded or dead fallen on both sides than the chiefs were already congregated to conclude a peace treaty. Here again, we meant to respect the political organization of the natives by the creation of chiefdomships and native chiefs, who were to form the political-administrative link between the native clans and the European higher administration. Such chiefs were totally unknown to native society. Together with the establishment of the native courts, the establishment of chiefdomships gave the death blow to the actual social organization of the Nkundo-Mongo. The very fact that these institutions are territorial demonstrates clearly that here no ordinary shifting of power has taken place, but simply an elimination of the traditional power in favor of a new colonial power.

Indeed, where formerly the "customary rightful chief" was sought out, even though it was sometimes only a formality, the new formula of the "society" has relieved the higher administration from this care too. And it is only to be hoped that this new formula will at least do away with the legal fiction that the "chiefs" are actually "something native," so that they may be classified for once and for all in the

category of civil servants. In this manner they would fall under the written law and could be obliged to practice monogamy, whereas now nearly all of the "native chiefs" are precisely the maintainers and promoters of polygamy. If this had /136/ been enforced from the start, then polygamy, instead of spreading, would have virtually disappeared from the native society.

## 5. Splitting of the Clan

After all that has been said before, it must be rather apparent how an autonomous clan can split up and, thereby, form two autonomous clans.

When a clan has expanded too far, its leaders cross over the boundaries of blood relationship, and offenses against the law of exogamy occur. When such offenses are multiplied, further separation is gradually aimed at to make marriages possible. Such a situation between two parts of the same clan, who are striving for "legal autonomy," is called lonkana, a term that signifies that unlawful relations exist between the two. It generally occurs between member groups that have the same male ancestor, but not the same female ancestor--that is, they are issue from different wives of the male founder.

Another cause of splitting is the voluntary or obligatory withdrawal of one of the members. When he establishes himself outside, begets a sizeable progeny, and acquires a patrimony of his own, the relations with his own clan become less frequent, and the separated fraction gradually begins to settle smaller lawsuits, to maintain its own graveyard, to bury the umbilical cords of its children in its own territory, to take on its own name, and to refer to its own founder.

Often also at the source of this estrangement lies the refusal of a certain fraction of the clan to submit to the authority of the clan members.

## 6. Legal Dependents

Until now we have spoken only of the ethnic clan of the members who belong to it through descent. They /137/ are the sole bearers of

## 10. Conclusion

[12] Nkundo society was a fully alive, organic community. All of its organs functioned and were able to adjust continually to the changes in its life. Ethnically, socially-legally, and politically, they were open to every improvement. The organs with which it was built stood nearest to natural law and drew their rights and duties from it, and also the spirit which inspired them.

The facts prove that this society could survive. It arose at the source of the Lomako; in a short time it had extended itself peacefully over the whole central area of the Congo; it pressed eastward across the Lomami and Lualaba, and southward across the Kasai /Kasai/-Sankuru, to occupy about a fifth of the present Congo at the time of the arrival of the Whites.

[13] This society was open to all healthy influences and could adapt itself to all reasonable demands of civilization. It was, however, not reconcilable with what precisely is wrong in our European ideas about progress and civilization: elimination of all ethnic intermediary organs, equalization of all individuals, materialization of all life on the basis of economic competition, slave-like submission to the impersonal, unpersonal State, with that terrible pretense of freedom, of being able to do everything that is not forbidden by the State.

[14] [16] This suddenly attained freedom, which was accompanied by the abolition of all the former joints of society, means the death of the Nkundo /161/ community, not only in its soul, its being, but also in its existence. The gradual depopulation, the dying out in the Middle Congo, has had repercussions now and then, even in government circles. "The Nkundo-Mongo population is melting away like snow before the sun," is the brief comment of the last official report. The Wasia, between the Ruki and the Ikelemba /rivers/, had in 1929 ninety deaths and three births. The official statistics of 1939 of the territory of Coquilhatville give one hundred adults for every twenty-four children. The official data of the same year for the Vicariate of Coquilhatville, with its 385,726 inhabitants, give a ratio of 415 children to 1,000 adults. According to these data, the whole population will be decreased by more than 50 percent by the following generation, thus dwindled to less than one-half.

Coquilhatville, 1939

463 Division of labor is unknown, and each person works entirely on his own, without the help of a middleman. There are no laborers
●[177] and certainly no artisans unless there happens to be some artisan or other who learned his trade under the government or at one or other of the Mission posts and has returned to his village after having completed his contract.

As a rule, such people do not find sufficient work in their own villages, and, as they are usually in possession of a few boxes, clothes, and pots and pans which they have acquired with the savings of their monthly salary, they play the grand gentleman in their village until their goods and chattels have been used up and worn out.

"Njolemwa Bosala," he says, "I am tired of work." "Njowa l'ompele," "I am dying of the heavy, difficult work."

Several of them there return to one or the other of the centers of the White settlers and again offer themselves as craftsmen.

557 A good craftsman has a high reputation among the natives, and his social position is even a very good one for a Negro. He is able regularly to supply food for his wife and children and also to get himself clothes.

326 Although most Negroes work individually, this is not true of the smith who has to have helpers in order to do his job.

465 Since the Mongo Negro knows nothing of wages, his helpers get
436 part of the income, consisting of mitako [a kind of metal currency] or some part of the work that has been done, either a knife or a lance, or a foot or arm ring.

## I. THE SMITH'S TRADE.

326 Of the various industrial trades, that of the smith is certainly the
557 first in rank. The smith is one of the leading people [94] in the village and one of the inevitable persons to have a decisive voice in village affairs whether in settling differences or in meetings.

In fact, the smith is the only one of the Mongo Negroes who works regularly and does not rest on his oars. From what he earns he is able to buy quite a number of wives, and he is regarded as one of the village heads whose wishes must be consulted.

352 322 [102] Occasionally one sees a native stool, made as described above, but with a kind of back rest chopped out of one piece.

342 177 The Negro who wishes to move with the times makes for his house a chair out of bamboo in the European style: some sticks stuck in the ground, a mat of split bamboo laid over them, and the gentleman can spend his days in dolce far niente [pleasant idleness].

352 322 A table made in the same way (otherwise unknown to the Negro) completes the furnishing of his hut.

One does not need to be an expert, either, in order to be able to make a Negro bed. Some straight sticks are chopped out of the mombombo (umbrella tree). These are placed lengthwise and then across, on top of each other, trimmed a bit at the edges so that the whole thing fits more or less, and it is then bound together with some [935] split lianas. In this way the Negro has made a bed; this favorite piece of furniture is finished for a sale price of 5 to 10 mitako.

The making of beds could be classed among the Mongo trades. [937] I once saw, in the interior, ten of these beds, large and small spread out along the side of the road for sale.

I was assured that the owner of the beds was the very best bed-maker of the village. Of course, I raised my hat to such an important personage.

The ekoba, the bed stool, is also indispensable. These ekoba take the place of our pillows and are made of one piece, formed to the shape of the head. It is a somewhat hard pillow, but the Negro head is hard and can put up with it; the fellow sleeps without having to be rocked.

322 252 To prepare his food he needs some mortars and pestles, and these are made of wood. He uses hardwood for these utensils so that the mortars do not wear away from the constant pounding.

In addition, the Negro makes his oars, his bow and arrows for 322 the hunt, and the lokombi. The lokombi is a flat, oblong, hollowed 534 block of wood over which some pegs are stretched [sic]. He plucks these with his fingers, thus producing a monotonous sound. This so-called musical instrument is the constant companion of the young man and accompanies him on his long treks through the Evenaar forest and on his visits to friends and acquaintances.

[104] III. WEAVING

The craft of the Mongo weaver is an honorable one and one that calls for much labor and attentiveness.

Weaving is no longer as much in vogue as it was in earlier times, because the younger people buy European materials. However, the weaver is still able to earn his daily bread comfortably, because the old people are too pagan to give up their old ingrained habit of wearing a loin cloth.

Weaving is a craft carried on by men only. Some are very skillful in the weaving of materials and command our admiration. Pieces of really beautiful workmanship were offered to us for sale; I had myself seen them being woven.

The weaver takes his knife, goes into the forest, and cuts the "mpekwo ia lifeke," the fibers of a certain kind of palm tree which he also sometimes plants on the open highway near his hut. As soon as he has sufficient fibers for the weaving he has in mind, he goes home and at his leisure scrapes the fibers with his knife until they are all of the same thickness.

After that he leaves them in the sun to dry. When they have dried sufficiently, he puts up in his hut or on the open highway the frame on which the fibers are to be hung.

After he has attached the fibers to the top cross-bar (they are bound between the top and bottom cross-bars), he holds down the bottom cross-bar with his foot and goes to work.

Often he uses fibers of different colors, and this gives a lovely effect to the piece of material.

Bofomi afom'oto, "the weaver is weaving material."

The weaver has a very simple way of giving the fibers their different colors.

From the forest he fetches a liana (lougoli) which contains the red, white, or black coloring agent, cuts it in pieces, puts them in a banana leaf which has been quickly scorched in the fire, adds some water and hangs all this, with the fibers, in a bag of banana leaves above the fire. When the dye has soaked thoroughly into the fibers, he has his colored fibers all ready [105] for the material he is about to weave. This mixture is called "bosaka."

We can add to that also a large number of black women who become the famous "housekeepers" of the Europeans. Although payment for these women was usually given to their owners, they were still withdrawn from the family life and the native customs. Finally, the Christian women, who now live in Christian marriage, must also be mentioned.

In addition, the price of wives and the bride price have [544] undergone great changes, primarily in those districts where the natives came into more immediate contact with Europeans. Before the arrival of the Europeans, their main medium of payment was the woman herself; a woman was paid for with a woman. Now it is forbidden to use women as currency. Therefore the natives have raised the price in the payment of bokanga and mitako.

In some districts close to the European centers, the natives have brought the price for wives and the bride price to a height never before known. For one wife they ask several nkesi.

A nkesi is 10,000 mitako. Such a sum is much too high in relation to their means. In a village there are, for instance, 50 women; for one woman, 40,000 to 50,000 mitako are asked, while at present in the whole village together the sum of 50,000 mitako is no more to be found. Therefore to oblige someone to pay two or three nkesi is usually to make it impossible for him to pay, or rather to make it necessary for him to pay with women, which is nothing else than encouraging woman trade, which then occurs.

A remark should also be made here about the nomenclature of the numerals. Nkesi is not a word of the Equatorial peoples; it was brought in from elsewhere with the Europeans. Their amounts were as follows:

10 was lum or bonkoma;

100 was nkoto; and with the arrival of the Whites and foreign population came

1,000 nkesi.

The present numerical value is: 10, lum; 100, bonkoma; 1,000, nkoto; and 10,000, nkesi. Some very old Negroes, however, still say bonkoma for 10.

This is the probable origin of the great rise in price of wives, especially in the area of Coquilhatville.

7:Brown M-S (ca. 1940) 1944 FOSI Mongo FOSI Bloomington

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# THE NEUMU OF THE TUMBA

## RITUAL CHIEFTAINSHIP ON THE MIDDLE CONGO

*R. D. BROWN*

THE tribes living around Lake Tumba, a lake some thirty-five miles long by twelve wide lying north of Lake Leopold II (approximately 2° 30' south latitude, and 18° east longitude) and draining into the Congo River at the confluence of the Ubangi, lack cohesion and show a considerable variety of customs and language. But they are known collectively as Tumba, the Government adaptation of the Native term *Nitumba*. Most of them are found to the east of the lake, the whole group numbering perhaps little more than forty to fifty thousand at the present time, though there is evidence that the last twenty years have seen a great decrease in population. European occupation of this area goes back barely fifty years, Protestant missions having been established for almost the same length of time. The first mission post was established at Ikoko on the south-east shore of the lake, one of the villages of a group known as Bongindo. In pursuing this investigation particular attention has been given to the practices of this group, but mention is occasionally made where considerable differences have been found elsewhere.

The Tumba are agricultural, hunting, and fishing people. Their country is flat and swampy with dense forests, and there are many watercourses flowing into Lake Tumba. There are occasional small, low swampy plains, and one such area, more open, with quite wide stretches of prairie, is a haunt of buffalo. The forests are fairly well supplied with game, and the swamps, streams, and lakes with fish. A heavy rainfall and no distinct dry season make agriculture reasonably easy and famine unknown. Every family has its plantation of cassava, the staple diet, which is supplemented by plantains and bananas. The people make their own tools, formerly smelting their own iron for this purpose, are fairly skilful at making dug-out canoes, engage in weaving raffia and making mats out of split cane, and are efficient at pottery production.

The role of the *nkumu* in the socio-religious activities of the community is one of the most interesting features of Tumba life. As a result of European contact the ceremonies connected with the *nkumu* are rapidly disappearing, but it has been possible to collect considerable information from the older men and women among whom the details are still vividly remembered.[1] The following report refers to the period previous to European occupation and control, a time within the memory of a large number of people, but already sufficiently remote to become a matter of history before the lapse of many more years.

An understanding of the place of the *nkumu* among the Tumba requires a glance at the tribal organization. According to the people themselves, they migrated westward, and coming into these parts chose land for themselves. Among the several

[1] In *My Children of the Forest*, New York, 1909, pp. 48-51, Andrew F. Dickson has briefly outlined some of the forms of honour observed among the slaves of the district adjacent to that of the present study. These were detailed some ten, however, years before the present study if a record is to be preserved that approximates to accuracy.